

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PE
SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF SIDER PERU STRIKERS PROVOKES VIOLENCE

REF: LIMA 0157

1. THE SIDER PERU STRIKE (REFTEL, WHICH BEGIN DEC 6, 1977 AT THE PORT TOWN OF CHIMBOTE ABOUT 380 KILOMETERS NORTH OF LIMA, BROKE OUT IN VIOLENCE JAN 13, LEAVING AT LEAST TWO DEAD AND SEVERAL PROTESTERS AND POLICE WOUNDED. A GROUP OF CHIMBORE UNIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE TOWN'S SLUM TOWNS HAD CALLED A 48-HOUR SYMPATHY STRIKE JAN 12. AFTER ONE DAY OF RELATIVE QUITE, DEMONSTRATORS FROM THIS GROUP OF SYMPATHIZERS CLASHED WITH THE POLICE. A YOUNG MAN UNRELATED TO THE PROTEST WAS KILLED BY A STRAY BULLET; THE SECOND VICTIM WAS MRS. ALBERTA GADEA HARO OF THE WOMEN'S STRIKE COMMITTEE OF THE PRUEBLO JOVEN "APRIL 21" WHO WAS STRUCK AND KILLED BY "A PROJE- TILE" DURING THE CLASH BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS AND POLICE. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE CONDITION OF 2 OF THE 15 WOUNDED DEMONSTRATORS IS SERIOUS, WHILE 20 GUARDIA CIVIL PERSONNEL SUFFERED WOUNDED FROM ROCKS TOROWN BY THE PROTESTORS.

2. THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF SANTA (THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISION IN WHICH CHIMBOTE IS LOCATED) REPORTEDLY SENT AN APPEAL TO
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GOP PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ CALLING FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THE HEAD OF SIDER PERU, THE REORGANIZATION OF THAT ENTITY AND THE NAMING OF A HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION TO RESOLVE THE STRIKE. THE HEAD OF THE COUNCIL (CHIMBOTE MAYOR MARCO PEREZ GONZALEZ) PROTESTED THE VIOLENT ATTITUDE DISPLAYED TOWARD THE CITIZENS OF CHIMBOTE.

3. THE LIMA PRESS ANNOUNCED JAN 14 THAT ORDER HAD BEEN RESTORED TO CHIMBOTE AND THE AUXILIARY BISHOP OF LIMA, LUIS BAMBAREN, EXPRESSED SORROW OVER THE EVENTS. ALTHOUGH NOT SUPPORTING THE STRIKERS' STAND, THE BISHOP'S STATEMENT CRITICIZED THE GOP BY IMPLICATION FOR HAVING ALLOWED THE STRIKE TO GO UNRESOLVED FOR 40 DAYS. CHIMBOTE BISHOP CARLOS SANTIAGO BURKE HAS OFFERED HIS GOOD OFFICES IN HELPING RESOLVE THE STRIKE AND INVESTIGATING THE JAN 13 INCIDENTS.

4. COMMENT: CHIMBOTE IS ONE OF THE LARGEST PERUVIAN URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES OUTSIDE OF THE LIMA-CALLAO AREA. ITS IRON AND STEEL WORKS, ALONG WITH A NEW TIN PLATING FACTORY, HAS EXPANDED WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND PROBABLY ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT 80 PERCENT OR MORE OF THE COUNTRY'S PRODUCTION. CHIMBOTE'S FISHING AND FISHMEAL FACTORIES HAD MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO ITS "BOOM" ATMOSPHERE IN THE LATE SIXTIES AND EARLY SEVENTIES. HOWEVER, THE DRASTIC DECLINE IN THE ANCHOVY CATCH PRODUCED A DEPRESSION IN CHIMBOTE AND THOUSANDS OF WORKERS OF THE FISHING FLEETS AND FACTORIES HAVE BEEN OUT OF WORK FROM MORE THAN TWO YEARS.

5. A CHIMBOTE MOTHER HAS CLAIMED THAT HER SON DIED FROM TEAR GAS AND RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING THAT MORE DEATHS OCCURRED THAN THE TWO REPORTED. VARIOUS UNIONS HAVE DECLARED A DAY A DAY OF MOURNING FOR THE VIOLENCE ALTHOUGH THE SYMPATHY STRIKE IS OVER. CALM IS REPORTED TO HAVE RETURNED TO CHIMBOTE BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEITHER THE SIDER PERU STRIKE NOR THE ISSUE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE M OLENCE HAS BEEN RESOLVED.
SHLAUDEMAM

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